The
COMMONWEAL

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The Lady or the Tiger

IT IS perhaps not altogether inconsistent that in Mrs. Luce, who is certainly the handsomest physical asset Congress has possessed in a long time, the nation should likewise have found a cogent and highly sophisticated proponent of nationalism and economic imperialism. After all, the basic purpose of female grooming is presumably to gain empire over males, especially when it is carried to the lengths displayed by the fair lass of Fairfield County.

Her maiden speech in the House, if you grant all the assumptions of nineteenth century capitalism and empire building, was an exceedingly convincing job. She assumes that human nature is "what it is, and nations forever greedy and contentious." Perhaps she is right, and it is certainly only prudent to allow for this cardinal factor. And yet she argues that it is only by allowing forthrightly for this factor that we can achieve peace. One cannot help wondering why this should be so. We have been making allowances of this sort for a good many centuries now, and we have not yet achieved peace. Might it not be that, by trying to think and act in other terms, while always bearing in mind the rapacity and selfishness of nations and people, we may enter upon a different road, which, if it unhappily should end in war, will end at no worse destination than does the nationalistic road we have always followed?

Her argument is simply this: we must insist upon "sovereignty of the air" rather than "freedom of the air." What precisely does she mean? It means that we shall not allow the planes of any other country either to fly over our territory or to land at our airports, except by specific bilateral or multilateral agreement, and presumably all other nations would act likewise. The policy of "freedom of the seas" has meant in the past that theoretically all vessels of all nations were free to sail over all oceans and free to land at all ports. Mrs. Luce would have us believe that this policy has engendered wars. Here it is difficult to follow her reasoning, especially in the light of the history of mercantilism. She likewise insists that this policy works to the advantage of cheap-labor-standard and exporting countries. And here she certainly has something. Under a general policy of freedom of the seas, the only way a nation like the United States could keep up any sort of merchant marine was by means of government subsidy. But one may question whether a large slice of national temperament does not enter into this. Great Britain is still an island country, and her people have a long tradition of going down to the sea in ships; our people as a whole have no such tradition, except in a few regions like the coast of Maine.

When it comes to aviation, precisely the same factors do not operate. Again national temperament plays its part. Those nations which are most "air-minded" and can establish a tradition of air-mindedness will have a certain edge on everyone else. It looks as though we already have this edge. Moreover, we are a nation which finds it very desirable to engage in the export trade; if American air freight and express rates can compete with those of other nations in a free air, there will be plenty of cargoes to ship in them. But the matter of labor standards is far less important in aviation than it is in shipping. The crew and the makers of any commercial plane will for a long time represent a standard of technical training far superior to that required of shipbuilders and seamen, and a standard which in any nation will carry with it high wages.

All of these reflections are thrown out merely to suggest that Mrs. Luce's argument is not watertight. It is a good and healthy thing that she should have raised the question, for once we have established the policy of the freedom of the air, it would be a very difficult business to revert to a policy of sovereignty of the air. Yet this whole debate, it seems to us, must be conducted in the light of something said by Mr. Sumner Welles at the opening of the New York Museum of Modern Art's war exhibit last week. "There could be no surer road to disaster, no surer means of bringing about unmitigated havoc in the future, than for the United Nations to enter the post-war period

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as rivals and opponents in their commercial and financial policies, rather than as collaborators in a common task of seeking and achieving international economic stability and general well-being."

Break It Up, Break It Up!

WASHINGTON has created board upon board, and now there is talk of "super-boards." A certain amount of this is inevitable. Everybody knows that when you are fighting a war you must centralize and concentrate authority. But the thing can go too far, and we think it is going too far. Not that boards are bad in themselves. Quite the contrary. But what we would prefer to super-boards is a few more sub-boards.

The CIO seems to have abandoned its Murray Plan for industry councils. This is too bad, but we gather that the business men and soldiers who dominate most of Washington's boards simply wouldn't play ball. Now the creative mind of Walter P. Reuther, Vice-President of the United Auto Workers (CIO), has come up with another smart, sensible plan, and we are not only for it, but we shall be more than a little annoyed if the business men put the skids to this too, for no better reason than that they just can't focus their eyes on anything emanating from a labor source.

Reuther points out that the War Labor Board (a super-board) is now operating "like a fire department, rushing from one dispute to another," settling only 396 out of 2119 wage disputes laid in its lap between January and November, 1942. So Reuther suggests a wage commission, representing management, labor and government, to work out and administer a master agreement in each industry. In the automobile industry, for example (including tanks and planes), there are now 600 to 700 separate wage negotiations, most of which wind up in the WLB bottleneck. It is true that regional WLB's are being set up, and this is several steps in the right direction, but the thing we need most and the thing we have so much trouble getting is decentralization by *industry*.

Wage stabilization under a master agreement is old hat now in the shipbuilding industry, thanks to the stubborn shouting of John Green, President of the CIO's shipbuilders' union. It is very old hat in railroads and mining, in certain sections of the clothing, ladies' garment, printing, trucking, and construction industries. In every case it has worked well, saved trouble, confusion and friction.

Reuther was shouted down, or yawned down, on his plan for converting the auto industry to war production. We understand that afterwards Washington, and even certain business men, were secretly sorry that they hadn't been a little more cordial to Mr. Reuther. We hope that this time Brother Reuther will shout even louder and longer before he gets discouraged. He may have a somewhat socialist background, but his latest idea is more away from socialism than toward it.

Where Opinion Counts

THE recent announcement that the *Nation*, "America's Leading Liberal Weekly since 1865," is appealing to its readers for "at least $25,000 to meet operating deficits" is a commentary on current reading habits. Despite the wider interest in public affairs brought about by the war—a factor quite apparent to our own circulation department—the field of weekly journalism of the reformist type still remains quite limited. Most literate Americans seem to prefer to plow their way each week through layers of Sunday papers—comics, lightweight and sensational magazine sections, full-page rug and furniture advertisements and the like. Or they take their weekly survey of the news in pictorial form with just enough captions to lead them on. A lesser but considerable number like their history-in-the-making jazzed up; witness the success of *Time*. Most Americans want to be lulled to day-of-rest quiescence, intrigued by color or by romance, or lifted out of themselves, their jaded interest in life revived, by recourse to mystery and far away excitement. The last thing these people want is to be pulled up straight in their chairs by a challenge that says, "here is something that is radically wrong and I want you—yes, I mean you—to do something about it." Hence the success of the entertainer, the hard lot of the reformist.

And so the present plight of the *Nation* may in no way reflect a lack of injustices to protest, a falling off in reader interest, mismanagement or abnormal rise in its costs of production. It is merely additional evidence that the field in which we toil is not financially profitable. As we recall, up to a very few years ago the *Nation* was rather heavily subsidized; as far as we know, this is still the case with the *New Republic*. Certainly it is true that the Stalinist *New Masses* is continually pleading for—and obtaining—genuinely substantial funds. Financing its way has ever been a problem with THE COMMONWEAL, even though now it is a more modest problem.

It would be an error to underestimate the influence of journals in this field because circulations are in the thousands rather than the millions. For they are the periodicals that really reach men and women of influence, commentators, government officials, teachers, citizens with the revulsion or enthusiasm to do something about things. That is why the influence of such journals of opinion cannot be measured in bare statistics. That is why believing in the principles we do, and their paramount importance at this crisis in the world, THE COMMONWEAL is also appealing to its readers for the modicum of assistance needed to carry on.

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Fu Yun

FU YUN is in Chungking. If you are careful about having the right kind of friends then they are American friends so that when you are separated from them it is usually that they are going to some other place in America and you can imagine what it is like even if you have not been there and your friends will be talking English and reading the papers and even if it is Arizona it will be an American desert, and they will be smoking Luckies and if they go to a movie it will be to a movie you will have seen and if they drink something it will be something you know about. And if you are separated from your friends and they go to the war, if they go to the Pacific islands, or to Greenland or to Africa they will be going where they have never been before and they won't know the English that the natives talk in foreign countries, they won't be at home, you will be in their home, you will be part of their memories of home, and when you think of them you will not feel that they are at home somewhere where you are not. But when you have a Chinese friend and he is in Chungking he is at home and that means that he has left you entirely.

You have so little to go on. You had a Chinese friend with whom you did not even talk about China. A friend, simply. With your American friends you do not talk about America. Not all the time. You know where they come from and, in a novel, you know all about the early days on a farm, and through Pearl Buck you know all about life on a Chinese farm but by the time you know a man in America he is no longer the boy on the farm, he is a salesman in New York, and by the time you knew Fu Yun he was no longer a Chinese boy learning English, learning French—observable to Miss Buck—his work was in Europe and he was worried about the Spanish war and then he was worried about Munich and then he was worried when war came to France. He was thinking about economics and law, he was thinking about the writing men were doing in France, he was thinking about his wife and his children.

He did not talk like someone in Lin Yutang's books. He did not seem filled with the wisdom of the East. From time to time an aphorism, a proverb, but as a tactful concession to what was expected, a translation of some Chinese verse. From time to time he would prepare some Chinese dish but simply as an accomplishment to entertain. We did not talk pidgin English to him, we did not need to simplify our references. The laughter, the seasons, the fear which grew round us touched him as they touched any of us.

You have so little to go on when a friend like that has returned to Chungking.

He was like nothing in the Chinese theater. There would be no use in New York, in San Francisco, going to the Chinese theater. One cannot think of him in the brocade, in the pale blue, in the saffron garments, bearded, wielding a heavy sword while the princess falls and the stage hand in a sweater places a carpet on the floor where she will faint and there are the musicians in street clothes to the side of the stage.

Fu Yun had bought a second hand Austin coupe and the C.D. tag on it looked funny and for a while the customs guards at the frontier would check his credentials every day as he crossed the frontier because diplomats generally do not ride in anything less than a Ford. Fu Yun was a Chinese accredited to the International Labor Office in Geneva, but he lived across the frontier in France and when the war came it was still possible for a time for him to work in Switzerland every day, and when he came back in the evening to Ferney he would bring Swiss cigarettes, China tea, and the newspapers, but after a time the plain clothes men from Paris who took over passport control at the frontier did not like the idea of his going to and fro every day and he was obliged to move to Geneva. There was a little country road and after it left the village and the farms on the outskirts of the village you would drive up a little rise in the road and then the road went down hill for a short distance and you would stop the car because the road was barred. There was a barricade across the road between the French customs house and the Swiss customs house and the French sentries examined your papers and then there was part of the barricade which could be moved aside and you drove through and then the Swiss sentries examined your papers. In the days before the war it was all fairly simple: it was like entering California, and when the war started at first the frontier was only closed from time to time but the Intelligence people would not leave things like that for long and one day Fu Yun went to Geneva and did not return.

We read the statistics, we read about the endless struggle in China. We see pictures of the Chinese soldiers and of Chiang Kai-Shek. We see the bombed houses, the dreadful pictures of the Chinese dead. We think of the Chinese plains and the distances and the earth, the "good earth." But this Chinese friend had not prepared us for anything so distant, so exotic, for any such unimaginable suffering. He had not prepared us to think of the Chinese people as if they lived in Mars. He had not accustomed us to think of them as strange men with skin colored differently from ours, with feelings different from our own. And now he is in the war in China and we cannot follow him into the unknown. Perhaps that is what he wanted, what he planned: that we should think of his people as we think of him. Perhaps there is nothing in China which is unknown to his friends.

C. G. PAULDING.

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America's Role in the New Europe

A broadcast appealing for our trust and heroic friendship, for boldness and faith.

By **Jacques Maritain**

I OWE to the courtesy of Freedom House the opportunity of speaking to many known and unknown American friends. This is a great privilege for a French philosopher, for which I feel very grateful. I should like to avail myself of this privilege to tell you something about Europe and European and American cooperation, not from a political point of view, but rather from a psychological and cultural one.

Let us not believe that to help Europe and re-educate it is an easy job. Europe is old and experienced; it has experience, a terrible experience, in wisdom as well as in wickedness. It has a deep sense of what man really is. Neither idealistic formulas nor technological improvements mean much to Europe. It is now visited by death, starvation, the extermination of bodies and the torture of souls, all the ordeals of the Apocalypse. It will be replete with bitterness. Europe, as well as Asia, will be sure to have learned a great deal and to know a great deal—a bitter knowledge of its own. It will have its own ideas and its own will as to the future of the world. Many dangers, such as the possible upsurge of nationalistic trends, of irreconcilable hatreds, of vengeful social resentments, will threaten its conscience. Perhaps the ordinary post-war phenomenon of moral relaxation and I-don't-care-a-hang skepticism will take place in many people. But deeply rooted will be an abiding flame of revolt against the evils suffered and the injustices of the past. We must accept the risk of such a burning flame, which can be extinguished only by running a worse risk of moral chaos.

The point is to have this strong impulse directed toward an all-embracing constructive work, and animated by a real sense of human rights and a real will to liberty and fraternity. The European peoples have their own way of looking upon this constructive work. They consider the particular features given to private ownership and free enterprise by capitalism to be already things of the past. And as a matter of fact Manchester liberalism is gone. Europe aspires to a new civilization, not to communism, but to an order in which each human person may enjoy social as well as political freedom and the working classes reach their historic coming of age. Spiritually, the European peoples feel more or less obscurely that a new constructive impulse is possible only if Christianity frees itself from any encroachment by the human interests of ruling classes now morally bankrupt, and if Democracy frees itself from any blind and narrow dread of the Gospel values. In short, fascist and nazi countries, especially their youth, will require a deep and lasting work of education—education for freedom replacing education for death. Yet as to the oppressed peoples of Europe, they do not feel they need to be reeducated, they feel that they need to be liberated in order to cooperate with the Americas in the rebuilding of the world.

Such being the picture, we see what a huge effort of mutual adaptation lies ahead. If perchance the American people were to underrate the moral difficulty of the common task, or expected from distressed Europe that kind of tractability and prompt gratitude which the poor display towards the benevolent rich, or forgot that to bring one's love to the European peoples is also to put one's hand into a briar, my great fear is that by reason of disappointment and disillusionment this country may fall back into an isolation which would be a disaster for the world. Your ancestors left Europe and the oppression they suffered, in order to create a new world for human fellowship and liberty. Now the time has come for you to turn your eyes back toward the old soil of sorrow, hope and trial. The European peoples have always looked upon America as the Islands of the Blest. Be aware of the magnitude of the hope they have placed in you. They are not ungrateful, their anticipated gratitude is as great as their hope. If you give them only food and economic help and technical means, they will sincerely say: "Thank you very much," and go about their own affairs. What they ask you to give them also is your trust.

They ask that they be trusted in the things they are determined to undertake. The spiritual grandeur of the task in which you are engaged therefore must not be minimized. It is a task of heroic friendship. In other words, the first thing needed by peoples is to share together in a common task which is greater than themselves and to which they give themselves wholly, a common work both spiritual and material, and toward which nations are now looking as the building up

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of a new Christian civilization. Europe and America have each their own ideas about this work, and their own conceptions about the internal economic régime suitable to each; while keeping their differences, these ideas may be adjusted, these conceptions may labor together. No lasting good can be done to the world if the sense of the tragedy of life, and that quality of heroism which Europe must display to overcome its tragedy, and the sense of the great human adventure, and that quality of heroism which America must display to lead her adventure to completion, are not joined with one another in boldness and faith.

There is indeed one thing that Europe knows well, and knows only too well; that is the tragic significance of life. For a thousand years of sorrow Europe has been paying to acquire a slight knowledge of what man really is, and how high is the cost of the slightest progress. The experience Europe acquired is a treasury of tears. This experience has exposed it to a terrible risk of skepticism; but its experience with skepticism, which it suffered under its pre-war leaders and is suffering today in its leprosy of collaborationists, has imposed upon it the proof that skepticism would dig its grave.

There is one thing that America knows well, and that she teaches as a great and precious lesson to those who come in contact with her astounding adventure: it is the value and dignity of the common man, the value and dignity of the people. In this country, what is known as the *common man* is neither servile nor arrogant. He has a sense of the dignity of human existence, and he exists in the collective consciousness of the value of each and every man. We have here, in a shape so simply human that pretentious and pedantic people fail to see it clearly, a spiritual gain of infinite price. American civilization has as its incentive that dignity which everyone possesses in everyday existence, and it is to realize it more fully, not only at home but throughout the world, that America has emerged from her traditional isolation and has accepted war, and that she now has set out for a new world. She knows that the common man has a right to "the pursuit of happiness"; the pursuit of the elementary conditions and possessions which are the prerequisites of a free life, and the denial of which, suffered by such multitudes, is a horrible wound in the flesh of humanity; the pursuit of the higher possessions of culture and the spirit; the pursuit of release from dire poverty, from fear and servitude; the pursuit of that freedom and human fulfilment linked with self-control, which is the highest aim of civilization and which, in a superior order, requires for its perfect realization the spiritual transformation of the human being, at the price of much love and the incessant gift of self. Here heroism is required, not to overcome tragedy, but to bring to a successful conclusion the formidable adventure begun in this country by the Pilgrim Fathers and the pioneers, and continued in the great days of the Declaration of Independence and the Revolutionary War.

To summon all men to the pursuit of such happiness, if only one places it high enough and knows the price it costs, is to undertake the greatest of temporal revolutions. And this has meaning only if the call to the pursuit of happiness is an undivided call to heroism.

We have a right to call upon the heroism of the average man, not for a continuous output of collective heroism but for a common acceptance of a heroic ideal of life. Today we have the proof, the sublime or monstrous proof, before our eyes. Millions of men are willing to die for causes just or unjust, for an exalted ideal or an abject ideal to which they have given their hearts and to which they sacrifice what they hold most dear. For iniquitous aggression or for a just defense, in victory or in defeat, they pay a heavy price of blood. They suffer their cities to be destroyed and set on fire, their women and children to be exposed to death, starvation and torture. And to all this they are only partially constrained by terror or the hard laws of military or civil discipline. For them to brave all this, there must have been some hidden springs rising in the depths of their being, springs of warped generosity or of sound generosity, which invest justice and good with a lovelier glow, or give to evil a human aspect.

Is it impossible to direct these immense resources of courage, endurance and obscure instinct for sacrifice toward an austere and difficult task of human rehabilitation and fraternity? Since, in any event, we must give our lives, it is better to give them for our brothers than to save them for slaughter. If the common life in which I am involved is built upon injustice, some day I must courageously suffer the beasts to devour me and my children. If this common life is directed toward justice, at least I shall have the hope that my children will be happy, and courageous too. It is better to wear ourselves out in the service of what is good than to be worn out by the forces of evil. These are simple facts. A day will come when the common conscience will understand them.

It is not a question of asking that all men during their whole lives be ready to accept martyrdom. The new leadership, yes, those men who will resume for the peoples of the modern world a task analogous to that of the old orders of Christendom which ransomed captives and defended widows and orphans, these men may be asked to accept, if need be, martyrdom for the sake of justice or brotherly love. But it is absurd to demand constant heroism on the part of everyone. The common people know the meaning of hard work and daily courage, they have known it for centuries. What we are asking is that, in a community of

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citizens in which social discipline will doubtless be strict, this hard work and daily courage be used to improve and render more worthy of man the very life of the common people, and that the atmosphere and inspiration of this communal life be an inspiration of generosity and an atmosphere of heroic hope.

It is up to the supreme effort of human freedom, in the life-struggle in which it is involved today, if the era we are entering is not to be the era of the masses, of the shapeless multitudes, fed and enslaved and led to slaughter by infamous half-Gods, but rather the era of the people and of the common man; of the common man aware of the personal dignity within him, builder of a more human world, and gazing toward an ideal of human brotherhood. In order for that to take place there will have to be a mutual interplay and interpenetration of the sense of life's tragedy and of the sense of the great human adventure. It will be necessary for the European spirit and the American spirit to meet and cooperate in common good will. We do not believe that Paradise will be reached tomorrow. But the task to which we are summoned, the work we will have to pursue, with all the more courage and hope as it will be incessantly betrayed by human weakness, must have as its aim, if we want civilization to survive, a world of free men penetrated in its secular substance by a real and vital Christianity, a world in which the inspiration of the Gospel will direct the common life of man toward an heroic humanism.

The West Indies

Bridge and laboratory of Inter-Americanism

By **Basil Matthews**

"MORE Trade With Latin America—the Key to Hemisphere Solidarity." So says the title page of a publication by the Office of Foreign Agricultural Relations of the Department of Agriculture. But is it?

Trade can perhaps play some part, but hemisphere solidarity between the Americas is at root a matter of inter-cultural understanding and respect, of penetration and appreciation. The sooner this is realized the better for our defense, our trade and our cherished American way of life.

The Office of the Coordinator of Inter American Affairs is more suitably placed to see things in perspective. It has striven "to build up a strong mutual respect and understanding between the Americas" as the basis for a joint meeting of wartime demands and joint planning of a sound postwar structure. Its program, reorganized after a year of experience, is still "designed to help forge bonds of mutual understanding and appreciation which form the basis of a close cooperative approach to joint problems."

Cultural differences north and south of the Rio Grande are fundamental in certain instances, accidental in others. But on the whole there is a tremendous cultural gap between the United States and South America. Of all these cultural issues religion is the largest and farthest reaching.

U. S. Ambassador to Argentina Weddell found that the Catholic faith "runs like a golden thread through the fiber of national life." Theodore Roosevelt was well aware of what U. S. "acceptance" by Latin America was up against. That would not be, so "long as these countries remain Catholic." Thus he expressed himself to Dr. Francisco P. Moreno. The President's view was pessimistic and exaggerated. Perhaps nowhere else in the world do Catholics and non-Catholics live in closer fellowship than in the islands of the Caribbean. Between Catholics and non-Catholics anywhere in the world there is always a cultural gap. In social practice it has been possible to bridge it without compromising things which cannot be compromised. It is possible to span the as yet unbridged gap between the United States and South America. But how?

The fact is that culturally the West Indies are midway between the United States and South America. Geographically they span the stretch of the Caribbean that separates the two continents. Culturally they can be used to bridge the expanse between these continental peoples. In practice they can easily become the laboratory of a living Pan Americanism.

The West Indian islands are Spanish or Ibero-American (Cuba, Haiti, the Dominican Republic); US (Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands); British (nineteen units, chief of which are Jamaica, Trinidad); French (Martinique and Guadeloupe); Dutch (Curaçao and smaller islands). The three Guianas and British Honduras—mainland areas—though geographically South and Central American, are classified for practical purposes with the Caribbean Islands. They are sim-

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ilar to them in economy as well as in their racial character. The total population of the Caribbean is about fifteen millions; it is greater than that of the Argentine Republic.

Of these fifteen million people six and a half (6½) belong to the Spanish islands, about five (5) millions to the Anglo-Saxon possessions (British and American). Three million and a half people are distributed amongst the French (including Haiti) and Dutch possessions, the French having more than three million. Considering that both the Spanish and French civilizations are Latin, it is at once obvious that the general social system of the West Indies is Latin and Anglo-Saxon. And it is not that the two systems are mere juxtapositions having no deep inner connection. No. The Anglo-Saxon social system where it exists is in almost every instance a superstructure built upon a Latin culture and civilization. Thus the culture pattern of the whole West Indies is fundamentally one. Because as a group they combine Latin culture with British training and American sympathies, they form the natural bond between the culture of South America as a whole and the basically Anglo-Saxon social system of the United States.

An estimated two-thirds of the West Indies population is Catholic. The other third is distributed among Protestants. There is a sprinkling of non-Christians, mostly East Indians, and a handful of Chinese. Because of the long coexistence of these beliefs on the relatively restricted area of the West Indies, because of the cosmopolitan character of the people, and because of the resulting inter-faith marriages, the predominantly Catholic West Indian people understand the Protestant mind, or at least its manner, and live in peace, fellowship and collaboration with Protestants and vice versa. To a considerable extent, too, West Indian Protestants even live by the Catholic tradition—a phenomenon easily understood in the Caribbean's Catholic background.

The West Indian political tradition is partly democratic and partly authoritarian. It is democratic in certain functions of government, or rather it is democratic up to a certain point in all functions of government. After that it is authoritarian, especially on the executive side. The tendency, however, is towards a more representative form of government.

The West Indian social and racial structure is based on the class system. It is thus hierarchical as in South America. But it is also democratic, as in the United States, and more so, because it cuts straight through race and color lines, as it does south of the Rio Grande. West Indian people of color have lived and worked for long years side by side with Ibero-Americans in Panama, Cuba, Puerto Rico and South America, especially in Venezuela. In the West Indies American color prejudice is grievously resented by the population, the great majority of which is colored.

Folk-ways are Latin, Afro-Latin and British, with a liberal helping of Anglo-American manners. In the British islands the British way prevails among the upper and the upper middle classes. The American way (jargon, political ideas, certain forms of popular entertainment) has been steadily gaining ground amongst the lower middle class and the masses. In Cuba, Haiti and the US possessions in the Caribbean, American influence for good and evil has always been strongly felt.

The familiarity of West Indians at home with the North American manner is the point to be stressed here. Before World War II, tourists from the United States were well known all over the Caribbean. The sugar plantations and factories of Cuba, Puerto Rico, the Dominican Republic and the Virgin Islands were largely controlled by Americans. Public utilities in the West Indies—steamships, telephones, railroads, urban transportation—were owned and managed by them. They invested heavily in bananas in Jamaica and Haiti. In Trinidad they figured as oil drillers. They supervised the refining of Venezuelan oil in the Dutch West Indies. They owned and operated the bauxite mines of Guiana. Since the outbreak of World War II, Americans are everywhere in the West Indies as soldiers, sailors, airmen, defense workers with their families. Even schools are being conducted locally for their children. The rapidity with which the West Indian workingman is assimilating Yankee folk-ways is downright amazing. It is indicative of unique native potentialities for compounding things Latin with things Anglo-American.

As in South America, the tradition of West Indian schools is definitely liberal on the secondary level. The teaching of the physical sciences has occupied an increasingly large place in the last decade or so. Even in the elementary or grade schools education is along academic and liberal lines. Agriculture is regarded as a sort of side issue, a school hobby, more or less. The University of Puerto Rico, however, conducts an excellent experimental station in agriculture. The School of Tropical Agriculture in Trinidad is as far from the native as Oxford University.

Spanish is the native speech of the Ibero-Caribbean. But it is also read, understood and frequently spoken by nearly all the cultured élite of the other islands. Large masses of the people, too, in the other islands have a working knowledge of Spanish. Petty trading and intercourse between the British and French islands and Venezuela brought this about. Boatmen, seamen, fishermen, the small traders themselves are especially proficient. The thousands of British Caribbeans who for long years worked in the Canal Zone, in

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Cuba, Puerto Rico and South America, Venezuela, all speak Spanish.

English is the native language of the British Caribbean, including therewith the one-time British Virgin Islands. It is now Puerto Rico's second language. Thus six and a half million people, or nearly half the population of the West Indies, speak English. Moreover, it is the ambition of the élite of the Spanish-speaking half of the Caribbean to handle English comfortably.

Portuguese is used by communities of Portuguese descent, originally from Portugal direct, or via Madeira and Brazil. They all understand, write and speak English, of course. Their Portuguese is a sort of household tongue.

French is the idiom of the French islands, including Haiti. It is to be found in all its classic purity and elegance. However, there, as in nearly all the British islands, it is also spoken in a more or less uniform dialect variation.

Thus French and British understand each other perfectly. The British can communicate with the Iberians. The Iberian élite can meet the French Caribbeans, a large minority of which is top-ranking in cultural achievement. As between West Indians the difficulty of language communications is next to nil. And they offer a complete language scheme to link the continents of the Western Hemisphere.

How to use the bridge

This West Indian cultural bridge should rest upon the solid groundwork of (a) an educational program addressed to the cultural élite, and (b) an economic program directed to the working masses. In both cases the appeal is to all the population groups of the Western Hemisphere. The bridge is designed to span the biggest single obstacle to good-neighborliness, namely American bossism in all forms. It offers the most natural as well as the most effective and shortest way to inter-American understanding and cultural appreciation. It provides an ideal setting within easy reach of both the Americas. It falls entirely in line with the immediate interests and actual projects of hemisphere defense.

It should be well understood, however, that since the several groups of hemisphere peoples have each their distinctive cultures, what we seek in a hemispheric educational program is not to make these several cultures uniform, but to embrace them under the unity of a wider, superstructure of Hemisphere culture. To endeavor to reduce the cultures of the hemisphere countries to a single pattern is both as foolish and futile as to try to unify their physical contours and economic potentialities.

What I hope for, then, is the establishment of an international university in the West Indies. It need not be located in any single island of the Caribbean. Indeed it should take into account already existing facilities for higher education there. In the arrangement of its syllabus certain subjects should be specially featured. These would naturally be those studies which (a) make for better mutual understanding and respect between Latin Americans and Anglo-Americans and (b) are adapted to meet the present needs and resources and promote the future development of the Caribbean, the key to hemisphere defense, and the countries of South America.

Hence the university would emphasize courses in:

(a) Aristotelian-Thomistic Philosophy
The Philosophy of Religion
The Comparative Study of Religions
Christian Ethics
(b) The History of the Catholic Church
Catholic Belief and Practice in the Americas
(c) The comparative study of the Political Tradition of Britain, the United States, Latin America.
(d) The History, Literature, Sociology, Art of both Americas.
(e) French, Spanish, English, Portuguese.
(f) Tropical Medicine
(g) Tropical Agriculture
Economics
Technology

The economic side of the project will bring together in the West Indies in moral and physical cooperation workers from the United States, South America and the West Indies. It will be in the main agricultural, since the Caribbean is primarily an agricultural region. It will seek to eliminate the one-crop economy, the basic cause of the social misery and economic degradation of the Caribbean. This baneful monoculture is hand and glove with a vicious capitalism and absentee ownership. Hence another evil to be eradicated by economic reform.

Will North Americans associate as friends and brothers with the colored population of the Caribbean in a Pan American program? If Americans are unwilling to associate with colored people, whether in the Caribbean or in South America, they are simply wasting their time and energy in a futile pursuit of the Good Neighbor policy. Brazil is undoubtedly the key to South America, and tomorrow's industrial capital of its continent. Yet colored blood (by the American definition) flows pretty freely through the population. And therefore color-struck Americans will not get to first base in Brazil. The same is true of Venezuela, the third largest oil-producing country in the world. Again, South Americans have their own interracial philosophy, and North American race and color prejudice is a scandal to them, a source of suspicion, mistrust and pain. So that Americans can either hold to their prejudices or give up dreaming of hemisphere solidarity. For its only basis is inter-cultural respect and understanding.

There is a group of North Americans whose religious beliefs and traditions predispose them to respect, to understand and to embrace the Carib-

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bean and South American outlook and practice in interracial matters. They are the Catholics. Not all of them allow their faith to get the better of them. But of the twenty million Catholics in America enough can be found who, lifted out of the cramping conventions of their surroundings, will associate freely with colored people in the Caribbean and elsewhere. Two-thirds of the West Indies are Catholic. The Catholic Church there has never had a race or color problem. A few thousand Catholic volunteers from the United States would easily be assimilated into the system.

Catholics by no means have the monopoly of people suited for the implementing of an inter-American social project in the West Indies. A certain type of American figures largely in the membership of the Rockefeller International Houses of New York, Chicago, Berkeley, Paris, Washington, D. C. Here is a man who is temperamentally cut out to be a builder of a true inter-American spirit. And the number of these Americans is not as small as might be imagined.

The United States has long encouraged and concluded trade and diplomatic agreements with South America. These agreements notwithstanding, South Americans have been alienated from rather than united with the Northerners. What is the explanation? John White, observer and reporter of South American social life for some twenty years, writes: "They charge that North Americans do not deal with them on a man-to-man basis but, at best, treat them as younger brothers in need of frequent advice and occasional chastisement. They strongly resent our cartoons showing Uncle Sam as a big masculine personality and the South Americans as pygmies wearing Mexican hats. Often, Uncle Sam has two of them by the scruff of the neck bumping their heads together."

American exchange-students, professors, newsmen, cameramen, have figured in South American life. All this has been mostly to the detriment of good-neighborliness. Why? Because of the bossist attitude of the American, because of his self-satisfaction, and, begging your pardon, because of his conceit. Latin antipathy is what these would-be Pan Americanists earned for themselves and their compatriots. To get under the skin of the average South American a man must be *simpatico*. No amount of business acumen or diplomatic astuteness will make up for a lack of the sum total of winning qualities conveyed by the term. The American outlook on his South American brother is biased. His vision needs correction. The most effective way to do this is to have North and South Americans meet and live together on terms of perfect equality in a neutral territory. And the Caribbean offers an ideal laboratory for the cultivating of inter-American understanding, respect, friendship and brotherhood.

Views & Reviews

BY MICHAEL WILLIAMS

FEBRUARY will be almost over before these jottings can take a place among Catholic Press Month discussion or debate. However, if they, and more solid contributions elsewhere, help to maintain interest in the subject, after the annual outburst of planned publicity has run its artificial course, why so much the better. For it is the steady, unslackening, persistent development of our press, carried on by those who do not exhaust their own energies and the interest of the public in occasional sprees of "promotion," that provides the best hope for the attainment of a press worthy of Catholicism in our country.

For example, one among several that might be mentioned, there is the group blessedly responsible for the *Thinker's Digest,* the "National Quarterly of Spiritual Reading," the editorial office of which is College Misericordia, Dallas, Pennsylvania, now in the spring of its fifth year; having completed its fourth volume with the number for Winter, 1943, which recently came to my desk, accompanied by several of the earlier numbers. I should suppose, after reading the list of members of the Editorial Board, and of the business and promotion departments, that college students are depended upon mainly, with the aid and inspiration flowing from springs both of high idealism and sound common sense provided by the faculty of the College; notably, since names ought to be named in these matters ("for the encouragement of others!"), of Miss B. Zedler and Sister Miriam, R.S.M. The latter was for ten years a college librarian. That she not only must have been zealous and practical in choosing and spreading the reading matter under her charge, but also, which is still more important, was blessed with the great gift of literary discernment, is proved by the effects produced on the students, and the effects which the work of these students, in selecting and editing the contents of the *Thinker's Digest,* will in turn produce upon its growing body of readers. Still a small body of readers—but "few and fit" is always the best motto to express the aim of any genuinely Catholic movement when its leaders and helpers start something really worth while.

For "quality" is the key-word of the journalistic work being done at Misericordia College. It is intended for, and it merits the attention of, the higher circles of our general reading public. It is not restricted to the narrow circle of the students and their admiring families (or their puzzled or indifferent families) and the somewhat condescending approval of ecclesiastical circles; which is the mediocre and conventional, the dull "bourgeois" atmosphere, and product, typifying far too many school and college publications. Sister Miriam and her group do not confuse literary values with piety, or religious zeal in itself; or (better still) with what is called "militant Catholicism" in quarters where it too often denotes using words as if they were blackthorn sticks at some unending Donnybrook Fair of "controversy" against assorted ene-

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mies, in which ructions many heads are rapped or cracked belonging to friends as well as enemies of the Faith; as well as the puzzled heads of innocent and bewildered by-standers. No; Sister Miriam and Miss Zedler, and others of the Faculty, quite evidently know that while piety and zeal are among the highest values of true religion, those who try to express piety and zeal in literature, or journalism, do not always possess those gifts and attainments without which all forms of writing lack what writing must possess to be a living and fruitful agent of the human spirit—or of the Divine Spirit itself. In literature, those gifts are true originality, creativeness, potent sense of form, and the power to communicate with other minds and souls; in journalism, the same gifts, on a lower plane, together with professional standards, genuinely followed, are essential.

Therefore the *Thinker's Digest* represents what is truly vital and sound and creatively Catholic, in a literary or journalistic sense, as well as in the religious sense. That it was begun some years ago, probably being the pioneer among periodicals of the "digest" type in the Catholic press, again shows how a spirit of high idealism is, from the practical point of view, the best of all forces in "getting things done." Even when such efforts fail—or seem to fail—(the dear Lord forbid that this remark should ever apply to the magazine under discussion now!) as being "before their due time," or too "high-brow," or imprudently "too advanced," something in the fire and light they kindle and spread warms and illuminates other hearts and minds and souls; on lower levels of work, sometimes; and the same idea is applied on such levels, and achieve great success.

All of which, if you please, does not necessarily mean that I am a convinced believer in, still less an enthusiastic advocate of, the "digest" type of journalism. Oh, yes, I admit that time is short, and rushing today at a pace that is more and more furious, and the reading habit in our young people can perhaps only be implanted, and nourished, with small and repeated doses of "reading matter." And as for readers no longer young, and steeped, perhaps beyond complete redemption, in the debilitating, often deadly, habits of screen and radio addiction, and "tabloid," "popular" journalism—again, I reluctantly, and with many reservations, agree that "digests" are at least a necessary antidote, and possibly even a useful primer in the art of good reading.

But while, for example, the deservedly successful *Catholic Digest* may be singled out as very much worth while, appealing to a much larger public than can be attracted by the *Thinker's Digest,* on the other hand the "digest" idea can be—and has been—so badly tampered with and mis-applied, under the pretense of "piety" and "zeal" in the cause of "militant Catholicism" as in the notorious and scandalous instance of the miserably mischievous *Catholic International,* edited, and now being suspiciously promoted, by the ambiguous David Gordon, and his much more ambiguous "clerical sponsors."

However, that's the very bad side of the splendidly good case for "digests" demonstrated by the *Thinker's Digest.* COMMONWEAL readers who pay any practical attention to the grumbles and growls, or the gleams and glows of praise and appreciaiton, provoked or inspired in this department by the ups and downs, the heights and depths, of the Catholic press, will make February a marked month on the calendar of our annual promotion campaign for that press, on the good side of the ledger, by writing to the editorial office of the *Thinker's Digest,* College Miseracordia, Dallas, Pennsylvania, for a sample copy. Better still, write to the business office, same address, enclosing $1.25 for a year's subscription.

Communications

HATE

TO the Editors: While Beethoven's Emperor Concerto goes on, I cannot help ruminating Deems Taylor's fine intermission talk and the equally fine letter he read. "The bloodthirstiness increases with the square of the distance from the actual battlefield." He is right, as Remarque was right in "All Quiet on the Western Front," when he let his hero get mad at the beer-mug-strategists at home who wanted to know how many people he killed. As a soldier of the last war I think you did a fine thing in your editorial against the idea that you have to "hate" to succeed. In the last war I fought on the German side, but I have yet to find a single instance in my memory to show that any of us fellows at the front hated any Frenchman, Englishman, Russian or American. We hated meanness, tyranny and injustice and some people who personified these things to us, just as some of us now have a very definite personal hate of Hitler and Mussolini and their cruel henchmen, because they have brought this misery on us. And I can imagine how a fine American or Allied soldier could hate any person on the other side who does such things or stands for them. But I have always found that fighting enemies respect each other, while the politicians far behind the lines clamor for blood and murder.

The other day I saw: "Commandos Strike at Dawn," which I enjoyed as a piece of good enlightenment and propaganda. In front of me there were two soldiers. When it came to those ghastly and unnecessarily realistic scenes on the airfield with bayoneting, bashing in of skulls and other revolting details at which I felt pretty sick (remembering 1914-1918), the otherwise civilized audience of kids, women and comfortable civilians indulged in applause, sneers, laughter and pleased grunting which made me feel lonesome and more sick.

And what did my soldiers in front of me do? They expressed their disgust with the scenes and the audience in so many words and did so pretty audibly in terms not fit for print. I did not feel lonely any more. I think men who have seen fighting and have had the sad duty of shooting at human beings don't feel too happy at seeing it all dragged down to revolting shots on screens pandering to sadism. Certainly a brutal enemy has to be exterminated as such and beaten down to unconditional surrender. But our brave men who do this do not relish killing for its own sake, don't froth at the mouth with personal hate and hysterical blood thirst. They certainly don't relish the thought that their women folk and kid brothers at home

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give vent to mob hysteria akin to a lynching crowd and to the instincts of Heydrick, Himmler and their ilk. I am surprised that P. T. Hartung had nothing to say in his critique of this movie to support your own noble thesis: "If we shall hate, we shall fail." VOX CLAMANS.

SOUTH AFRICAN LABOR

Washington, D. C.

TO the Editors: Since writing the review of "The Native Labor Problem of South Africa," by J. M. Tinley, I find that I should have read further into the situation. The following note appeared in the *American Federationist* (official magazine of the American Federation of Labor) for September, 1942:

> Trade unions of Negro workers will now be recognized by the Ministry of Labor of the Union of South Africa. Between 80 and 90 per cent of South Africa's unskilled labor is Negro. Previously the right to collective bargaining had been restricted to white workers; under the new plan it will be available to all, regardless of color.

Of course, we can continue to hope for the granting of the rights of "up-grading," as we say in America. It all boils down to this, however: are Africans—that is, natives—capable of being "civilized"? Can they advance? Or, we can put in this way: will European workers be colonized in increasing numbers in South Africa after World War II, and will the natives continue to serve them as helpers, common laborers, etc.?

What was once peculiar to black-white relations, however, is increasingly true of Europe generally. Already we have become conditioned to speak of *the enslavement* of the French, the Italians, the Poles, and other "captive" races. A more catholic attitude towards various "natives" ought to result from this war. But that is being hopeful, in spite of the type of propaganda that tends to come with the movements of our armed forces. We are also being conditioned, again, to dark-skinned *primitive* people. However, I say, there is still the problem of the defenders of the other-than-white races of the world! And what a challenge to everybody this is. GEORGE STREATOR.

STALIN

Brighton, Mass.

TO the Editors: In her review of Emil Ludwig's "Stalin" (January 15) Helen Iswolsky regrets that while "Ludwig asserts that Stalin's Constitution is one of the most remarkable documents of our times, he does not tell us quite clearly enough why this outstanding example of Stalin's legislation has never been applied."

Anyone who has read the 1936 Soviet Constitution knows that it is so filled with jokers that it has the Russian people tied in economic and political knots, even though "applied" most liberally. There is no doubt at all that it is "one of the most remarkable documents of our times."

A single example of what I mean is found in the farcical clause on religion, which guarantees "freedom of religious worship and of anti-religious propaganda." Not even those who read as they run can be ignorant of how both parts of this clause have been "applied."

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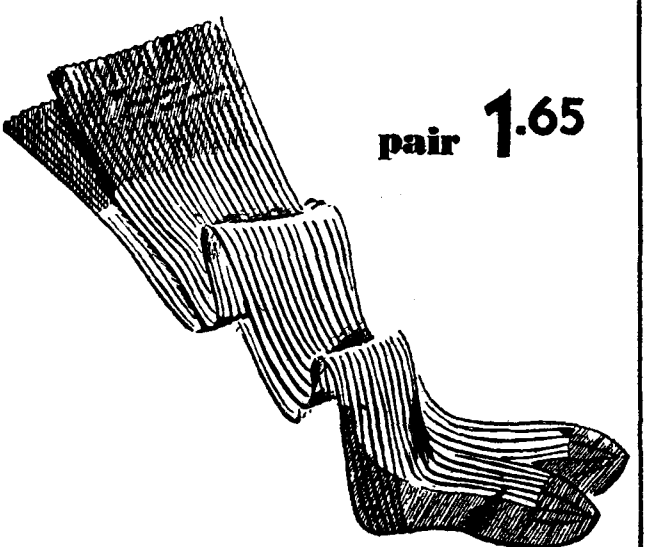

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When that hardy propagandist, Anna Louise Strong, wrote a commentary on this "remarkable document of our times" in 1936, Michael T. Florinsky wrote a review of her book for the New York *Times*. Its candor gives one a nostalgia for the time when our approach to the Russian problem was realistic. Mr. Florinsky observed: "The most striking conclusion that emerges from Miss Strong's pages—one not intended by the author—is the remarkable similarity between the methods and even the phraseology of the Soviet Constitution and those of Fascist Italy and National Socialist Germany. The much advertised provision of Article 12 that 'work in the USSR is a duty and a matter of honor' might have been taken verbally from Mussolini's Charter of Labor or from the program of the National Socialist Party. The 'right to work' of Article 118 is the exact equivalent of Hitler's *Arbeit und Brot*. The 'right to rest' and to leisure is also provided by the Charter of Labor and is much in the picture in Germany."

BERTRAND WEAVER, C.P.

GREAT MODERN CATHOLIC SHORT STORIES

Alexandria, Va.

TO the Editors: I fully agree with Mr. Paulding (February 12) that the title "Great Modern Catholic Short Stories" is "obviously bad."

Why in the name of common sense fasten a title that will kill interest in a book, at least with many people, before it is even read?

I am assistant librarian in a small public library in a largely Protestant community. We have a great demand for short stories by good authors, especially among high school students. I am recommending that this book be bought. I am afraid that because of the title its circulation will be small.

Mr. Farrow's "Damien, the Leper," is one of our best-circulating biographies. Of course, it is an absorbing and inspiring book, but I venture to say that if it had been called "Damien, the Priest," it would have spent most of the time on the shelves. "The children of this world are wiser in this generation than the children of light." It might be profitable for us to take this admonition to heart!

ELLEN COOLIDGE BURKE.

The Stage & Screen

Tinker's Dam

"TINKER'S DAM" by unhappy chance was viewed late by me. Had I missed it entirely, I feel I should have lost sight of what on all counts is the deepest, most ingenious and most moving play of this season. I found out from "Tinker's Dam" the reason why "Skin of Our Teeth" seemed to me and to many others, I am sure, a play not only lacking in spirituality but thoroughly materialistic. "Skin of Our Teeth" tries to restore faith in the immortality of generic human goodness. It is nothing but special pleading for a religion of humanity, the god of which is Progress. No less a form of special pleading, "Tinker's Dam" is inspired by a belief in personal immortality; yours and mine. Permanence of the race and its generic goodness is not scoffed at, but it is treated lightly as a matter of secondary importance. It is treated as non-essential. Progress of the spirit is shown to be no easier today than it was a thousand years ago. The struggles of mankind are interior to the individual and to the individual alone. Goodness and badness of individual character and personal action are *decisive* values; not the goodness or badness of conditioning circumstances, whether bathtubs, alphabets or smallpox. These things, exterior to the ethical ego, are morally neutral. Perfection of surroundings, the utmost refinements in understanding and worldly success, lacking ethical connections with the supernatural and with personal immortality, are for decisive judgments as fugitive as dreams and as unimportant as dust particles which drift momentarily through a shaft of light only to return again to permanent darkness and neutrality.

"Tinker's Dam" gets into your heart as well as your brain. It is full of delightful surprises. It is colorful, simple, joyous and compassionate as it swiftly tells of the wandering soul, of men chosen to be saved and to be damned, of the simple soul, of the death-like cast of the face of flesh and of the numbness of spiritual pride. It does all this in a manner so novel that you later wonder at the astonishing talent of the playwright Andrew Hawke. Never for a moment does his inspiration falter in contriving to tell his story in a fresh, arresting style which exploits nearly all the tricks of the stage now beguiling audiences crowding to see "Skin of Our Teeth." "Skin of Our Teeth" has succeeded and "Tinker's Dam" after three weeks has closed. New York theater-goers do not believe in personal immortality, but they wish to believe that after all our posterity will somehow survive and will "progress." Lawrence Fletcher had the lead, being beautifully supported by an excellent cast of whom Dort Clark should be particularly noticed. Direction was by Dennis Gurney, with incidental music and cotsumes supplied by Thomas H. F. Padian and Mie Munzer respectively. The Blackfriars are to be congratulated on producing so fine a play. No doubt it will be presented again at another time, and it is to be hoped to larger audiences. *(At the Blackfriars.)*

The Moon Vine

PATRICIA COLEMAN'S comedy is set in Louisiana, June, 1905. Mariah Meade (Haila Stoddard), a lovely and most unlikely candidate for marriage to a Protestant missionary usually—and throughout the play—somewhere among the Australian bushmen, nevertheless is found engaged to just such a creature as the action begins. Mariah had thought this engagement a sweet and affecting gesture, as indeed it was, but she begins to find the payoff rather boresome in terms of everyday reality. No more romance, no more parties, no more serenades. In this situation Danny Hatfield (Arthur Franz), actor, son of Reverend Dr. Randolph Hatfield (John McKee),

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moves in. Guess the ultimate result. You are right the first time. There are obstacles to this true love which make for a gay evening, although the situations productive of the obstacles are, to say the least, rather rough. It's all offstage, so don't be alarmed.

Without doubt this play has one of the most charming settings of the season. Lucinda Ballard did it.

Protestants of the fundamentalist faction may take offense at a revivalist scene. It is like a chapter from Herbert Asbury's "Up from Methodism" with a note of laughter making it excruciatingly funny to the audience. *(At the Morosco.)* JAMES N. VAUGHAN.

The Evil That Men Do

"THE HARD WAY" is only for adults who can stomach strong stuff. Irwin Shaw and Daniel Fuchs, who based their script on a story by Jerry Wald, build scene after scene upon Helen Chernen's meanness until their scenario reaches such a pitch of despicable frenzy that even its writers could see no way out for Helen; so they chose a writer's easy way and had her commit suicide. From the beginning, in grimy, soot-covered Greenhill, Helen is a hard, cheap schemer. Ida Lupino with calculated force makes Helen a relentless shrew. Even Katie, whom Helen purports to help by assisting her escape from Greenhill, finally becomes only a stepping-stone for Helen on her selfish rise to the top. Joan Leslie gives her best performance to date as the talented girl who becomes a Broadway star more because of her sister-in-law's Machiavellian management than through her own ability. Helen's victims include her own husband (made realistically sympathetic by Roman Bohnen), Katie's husband, a vaudevillian who never meant anything more to Helen than another step or a meal ticket (played with appropriate weakness by Jack Carson), a has-been actress who is shoved out by Helen so Katie can have her first really big chance (played superbly by Gladys George in a couple of top-notch scenes). Foremost among those who see through Helen is the man (Dennis Morgan) who was the partner of Katie's husband. Out of this sordid story, Director Vincent Sherman has fashioned some spell-binding entertainment. You don't believe what is happening; you don't care for any of the people to whom it is happening; but you won't be left unmoved by this story of evil. The acting is worthy of much better material. Jerry Wald's production is good but could have been improved by cutting that would take at least twenty minutes off the running time.

Hollywood has discovered that the best way to gain an audience's sympathies is to show a bunch of kids as refugees. We've had our Pied Pipers and Journeys for Margaret. Now *"The Amazing Mrs. Holliday"* tries the same recipe—but not with the usual success. The first half of the picture goes along with a bang. Your heart is won to the theme as soon as charming Deanna Durbin arrives at the luxurious house, claims she is Commodore Holliday's widow and proceeds to make her eight little waifs at home. The children are quite touching; cutest of all is Chinese Michael Chann who only has to laugh or cry to soften your heart. You feel almost kindly toward Deanna's hoax, which is really engineered by the imaginative sailor (Barry Fitzgerald) who was saved after the shipwreck with Deanna and her brood. Effective flash-backs show the missionary's daughter in her school in China, escaping with her charges from Jap bombs, hiding the children on the Commodore's boat. All of this proves interesting and moving in good cinema fashion; but you realize when the film introduces Edmond O'Brien as the Commodore's grandson that the plot is a foregone conclusion. The inevitable romance and solution are somewhat flat, but the working out is sentimentally pleasant to watch. Some of the musical numbers are dragged in, but Deanna sings them well. She even sings "Rock-a-bye, Baby" in Chinese. Bruce Manning produced and directed. Unfortunately the sincerity of the first part of his film is dissipated by its lifeless windup.

No matter how *"The Powers Girl"* tries, and it tries awfully hard, it never really becomes a movie at all. Its main failing is a dull script with corny lines and a story that doesn't amount to anything. Producer Charles R. Rogers attempted to pep up the film by adding Benny Goodman and his Orchestra to the conglomeration. They at least manage to swing some hot music. But the cast finds itself stranded without material and gives up. George Murphy, who has shown on several occasions that he can act, carries on in his rôle of photographer and agent with all the boyish verve and bounce of Mickey Rooney. Anne Shirley, who looks no more like a country school teacher than you do, and Carole Landis, as the mean, self-centered Powers girl who makes the grade, fight over George like a couple of trollops. Director Norman Z. McLeod finally remembered that Powers Girls were the film's subject matter, so he does show several scenes of the models in training. They walk downstairs with filled glasses, pick up cards from the floor and do a couple of other exercises in bloomers. A big production number

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shows us a few of the best "Powers Long-Stemmed American Beauties." But from cracks about wolves and the fact that a dame like the one portrayed by Miss Landis gets elected queen, mothers are very likely to keep their daughters out of the business. This film could have been an interesting study in the strenuous training and hard work that models do have—instead of this banal travesty on a profession. PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

Those Were the Days!

By EUPHEMIA VAN RENSSELAER WYATT

"GIDDAP," said the driver of the Broadway horse-car. The team pulled until the car bounced slowly into motion, the driver stamping on the bell to clear the tracks, for it was theater time at Broadway and Thirtieth Street—one of the most congested corners of the city.

"Hi! Stop that car!" shouted a gentleman in a high silk hat, racing past a cab and dodging a hansom. The conductor obligingly leaned over the back platform to swing the impatient passenger aboard but he, resisting, still shouted "Stop!" Reluctantly the conductor pulled the cord while the driver, muttering, pulled round the handle of his brake and the horses slowed down.

"Step lively now! Come on, if you're coming!"

"I just got off your car," panted the gentleman with the high hat.

"Then what the . . .?" yelled the conductor.

"I forgot to pay my fare."

The general gist of the conductor's reply reached us even over the rumble of traffic as we stood on the corner watching my father's perilous progress and the congestion caused by the conductor's pause for self expression.

"He seemed a little provoked," said my father as he reached the sidewalk. Then we crossed Broadway to Daly's Theater.

Daly's was an institution. Outwardly it had an elegant regality. Broad steps led up to an impressive foyer, high ceilinged and heavily carpeted. A coal fire burned in a lofty fireplace. On the walls, hung with rust-colored damask, was a fine collection of rare playbills and prints, dominated by a full length portrait of Ada Rehan as Katharine in "The Taming of the Shrew," her most spectacular rôle. Miss Rehan was the divinity of my childhood, so reverent being my admiration that when I was once taken back to her dressing-room, I lost all power of articulation. Mr. Daly, whose monogram loomed large but graceful upon the curtain, felt that his theater was a temple dedicated to a great art and his conviction permeated his audiences. Every New Yorker felt a tingle of pride when he entered Daly's portals, and in the hush before the rise of the curtain there was the feeling that one was privileged to be present at a rite of real importance. The generation trained by Daly was always conscious of the dignity of the theater.

Between October and April, New York could count on Mr. Daly providing at least three new productions: as a rule two comedies and the revival of some classic, each with a consummate cast and extremely lavish settings. Mr. Augustin Daly, indeed, had the same delight in sumptuous production as Sir Henry Irving. Italian furniture was imported from Italy for "The Taming of the Shrew," and the banquet scene was copied from a Veronese. As I look back, however, some of Mr. Daly's ideas would have undoubtedly raised the hair of the Ben Greet school of Shakespeare, for "The Tempest" opened with a miniature boat bumping about on an active canvas ocean and the scenic highlight of "Midsummer Night's Dream" was when the Duke brought back all the lovers on his barge to Athens—what river was not specified—but the banks rolled gaily by as the company reclined in the boat, to the great excitement and delight of the audiences. In "As You Like It" there was a fountain trickling real water and a moonlit interlude in the forest where the Duke's men marched about with a deer while singing a lusty chorus. But who can ever forget Miss Rehan's charm and humor as Rosalind, her red-haired fire as Katharine or Lewis as Sir Toby? And what a pleasant company it was with Otis Skinner, John Drew, William Gilbert and Mrs. Gilbert—who never did seem young—James Lewis, May Irwin and Ethel Kingdon (Mrs. George Gould). At the one hundredth performance of "The Taming of the Shrew," a supper party was given on the stage with such distinguished guests as General Sherman, William Winter, Elihu Vedder, Mark Twain and H. H. Furness.

Across Broadway from Daly's was Wallack's Theater. Lester Wallack had been a great actor-manager for thirty-six years and, when a benefit was given for him in 1888, both Daly's and the Lyceum closed their doors for the night. New York may have been a small city, but she was generous and the benefit grossed $21,560. It was "Hamlet" with Edwin Booth. Modjeska played Ophelia, Rose Coghlan the Queen, and Joe Jefferson and William Florence were the grave-diggers; all the rest of the cast were famous personalities. Palmer then took over Wallack's and changed the name of the theater to his own. He moved his stock company up from Madison Square where "Jim the Pen Man" had taken the town by storm. Annie Russell and Herbert Kelcey headed his company. At a benefit in 1885 for the Actors' Fund, a novel idea was tried for the first and only time. Three plays were selected, "The Rivals," "Engaged," and "Love on Crutches," and one act of each was played at Daly's, Wallack's, and the Madison Square Theater, so that the audiences for $2.00 could choose their play and then move to a different theater for each succeeding act. The resulting confusion was evidently enough to preclude the experiment ever being repeated. To New York in the nineteenth century, the theater was of vital importance, and since the theaters themselves were between Fourteenth and Thirty-Fourth Streets and the residential district was bounded by Washington Square and Forty-Second Street, with some pioneers in the Forties and Fifties, no one was very far away, the hub of social life being centered about Murray Hill. Theater-going was a family affair; it was the day of polite comedy and polite audiences. Life flowed to the rhythm of horse-drawn motion. Plays had neither to meet the impact of audiences primed with cocktails or on a subway schedule. From comfortable dinner tables,

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gleaming with silver, fine porcelain and cut-glass decanters, ladies and gentlemen, conscious of a well-ordered existence, would drive or walk around to see a play in which some other well-dressed, pleasant people were having a bit of trouble, but in which all clouds were sure to be dispersed by the time Act III was over. Those audiences were sympathetic to sentiment, they welcomed romance, and if tragedy appeared, the gentlemen blew their noses and the ladies softly sopped their tears with bits of embroidered cambric. Shakespeare they knew well and were able to compare the performances of the world's great actors. Such was the New York public in 1885-1888, which is the high water mark of Professor Odell's colossal opus, "The Annals of the New York Stage." * In this latest volume every play played, every opera sung and every vaudeville turn performed is listed during the three years mentioned.

The Lyceum Theater at Fourth Avenue and Twenty-Fourth Street had been opened in 1885 by Daniel Frohman with Minnie Maddern (Fiske) and Richard Mansfield in the first play. It was in Frohman's company, in 1888, that E. H. Sothern and William Faversham began to paralyze the critical faculties of female audiences. For the Lyceum in that same year, David Belasco and Cecil de Mille wrote a drama called "The Wife," with a well-worn plot but characters suited to fit each member of the company, the result being such a sensational success that it ran for 239 performances and Mr. Frohman was able to pay off a $50,000 bill to the Tiffany Studios—we wonder what for?

At the Fifth Avenue Theater on Madison Square two famous society beauties made their débuts, the English Lily Langtry and the American Mrs. James Brown Potter. It was the era of society amateurs, who were to give to the professional stage Clara Bloodgood, Elsie de Wolfe and Jacob Wendell. The Amateur Comedy Club had been founded in 1885, with Everet Jansen Wendell, who looked after street urchins, and Alex T. Mason, who led cotillions. At a benefit at the Lyceum Theater Faversham and Kelcey did not disdain to appear with Elsie de Wolfe, Mrs. William Fellowes Morgan and Edward Fales Coward, who remained on the border line between professional and amateur all his life and who knew almost all of Shakespeare by heart. When Mr. Coward forgot his lines in one play he would quickly substitute some lines from another.

One of the great theaters in those days, soon to disappear, was the Star at Thirteenth Street and Broadway. Bernhardt was seen there in 1887 just before she left for France, taking with her $300,000 as the result of one American tour. There Mary Anderson with Forbes-Robertson, Booth, Wilson Barrett, Modjeska, Sir Henry Irving and Ellen Terry, Joseph Jefferson and Julia Marlowe followed close upon each other from 1885-1888. Small wonder that when a certain Charles O'Conor essayed to appear there in his version of "Hamlet," he earned not only boos, but a considerable amount of waste vegetables. On the night of the great blizzard, March 12, 1888, the Star and Daly's were the only two theaters to open their doors. Both houses had been sold out, but Sir Henry Irving, as Faust, played for the first time in his career to rows of empty seats. At Daly's the play, optimistically enough, was "Midsummer Night's Dream."

R. H. Macy's was just opposite the Fourteenth Street Theater, where melodrama had its haunt and where Denman Thompson in 1887 had achieved a kind of immortality with "The Old Homestead." In 1888 Fanny Davenport was appearing in "Fedora" and "Tosca" in the Broadway Theater—way uptown at Forty-First Street—and the New York *Herald* bitterly attacked the immorality of Sardou. That same year, young Richard Mansfield electrified New York with his performance in "Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde" at the Madison Square Theater; William Gillette had written his first Civil War play, "Held by the Enemy"; Rosina Vokes had moved into Daly's when Daly took his company to London in April; Harrigan had opened his own theater for his lively farces; and Robert Mantell had commenced his career as a star in "The Marble Heart," with charming Effie Shannon, "looking sweetly pretty."

They were prosperous years for the theater, as recalled by Professor Odell, and what quickens the pages (723 of them) of his vast tome are his personal comments and memories of almost every item. The amount of routine work entailed is emphasized pathetically by his frequent mention of "his weary pen." It will be a miracle of patient endurance if the Brander Matthews Professor Emeritus of Dramatic Literature (in Residence) of Columbia University can round out his brobdingnagian undertaking to the close of the century.

* Annals of the New York Stage. Volume XIII. 1885-1888. George C. Odell. Columbia. $8.75.

Editors' Choice

JAKE HOME. *Ruth McKenney. Harcourt, Brace.* $3.00.

THORN-APPLE TREE. *Grace Campbell. Duell.* $2.50.
THE HAPPY MAN. *Robert Easton. Viking.* $2.50.
HAPPY LAND. *MacKinlay Kantor. Coward.* $1.25.

THE HUMAN COMEDY. *William Saroyan. Harcourt.* $2.75.

Stealing Our Stuff

RUTH McKENNEY is author of the amusing "My Sister Eileen" sketches, a contributor to the *New Yorker*, a professional humorist, and a good one. She is also an editor of the *New Masses*, a professional communist, and apparently not a bad one. Now she has written "Jake Home," her first novel, 503 closely-printed pages of melodrama, romance, humor, violence, sex, commie propaganda, proletarian corn, and a certain amount of really fine writing—in short, good and bad, but nearly always readable and interesting.

The hero of "Jake Home" is a communist organizer who gets born in a little Pennsylvania coal town and rapidly develops into a genius. He is a regular whiz on Shakespeare (like John L. Lewis), becomes president of his miners' local at 18 (like Phil Murray), grows into a great big fellow with jutting jaw and vibrant voice (like Big Bill Haywood), deserts the labor movement for nice money with the bosses (like thousands of others before and since), deserts the bosses and his beautiful wife for poverty and a broken head with the Communist Party

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(like nobody we know, but wouldn't be surprised if Miss McKenney had someone in mind), drifts away from the Party for beautiful rich girl and flesh-pots (like Clifford Odets maybe), and finally renounces flesh-pots and girl for more poverty and broken heads with the Party (really, Miss McKenney, twice in the same book?).

In between we get a violent strike in the mining town; a violent strike in the Altoona railroad yards; a commie reform movement among New York longshoremen, violently suppressed by Joe Flynn (Ryan); agitation for Sacco and Vanzetti and more violence in the lettuce fields of California; and finally a 1932 march on City Hall by New York unemployed under communist leadership, violently discouraged by Mayor Walker's police. (On April 22, 1932, the New York *Times* reported a communist-led demonstration of 3,000 unemployed in City Hall Square, in which eleven demonstrators and four cops were injured.)

We also get statements like this, in discussing organization of the Unemployed Councils (communist, later part of the Workers' Alliance): "He had forgotten all about the priest; trouble with the church was all in the day's run of business. Sometimes you pulled it off with a direct appeal, sometimes you had to hang on for dear life while membership fell off and the council hit a rough run of luck. But in the end necessity drove the frightened and bigoted back to the organization that would provide food for children, shoes for the husbands, a roof over the head for the desperate."

What hurts about that crack is the truth in it. Where the Church has helped the poor and desperate and fought for their rights, it need fear no Unemployed Councils nor communist-controlled unions. Where it hasn't, it does well to fear, for the faithful and for itself. "Heart speaks to heart," as Newman taught and as nearly every political party has learned, including Tammany.

And we get this, from an American comrade just returned from Russia: "I went to a school. I heard the teacher telling six-year-olds: 'You will inherit a future where all men love each other and are comrades, and where no man's hand is raised against his brother.' She told them that. They believe it. When they grow up, they will be the first generation of people in the whole world trained to love their fellow men."

It is a terribly shocking thing that an intelligent woman like Ruth McKenney could write a line like that and apparently believe it herself, disregarding communist hatred of the bosses, hatred of fascists, hatred of anti-Stalinists of every stripe. Disregarding, above all, nearly 2,000 years of organized Christianity, organized on the principle: "Love thy neighbor as thyself" and "love your enemies: do good to them that hate you . . ." And why does Ruth McKenney disregard Christianity? Perhaps because so many of us Christians have disregarded it too.

There is no question about it: communists, and other anti-Christian radicals, have been stealing our stuff. Sure, there are plenty of ruthless schemers, heartless Machiavellians, etc., among them. Sure, their ideas are crazy—theologically, ethically, economically crazy. But there really are noble men and women among them, people who have suffered and bled and died out of an honest love for their fellow men, people who can truly say with Jake Home, "I am not distinct from the pain, the humiliation, the frustration of the poor. . . . I know I have no other choice except to spend my life—my whole life, my whole strength—in one great rebellion against slavery."

The point is: why haven't they done these things, said these things in the name of Christ? Part of the fault is doubtless theirs, but part of it is also ours, and that is the part that we should think about, and even lie awake nights worrying about.

Degrees of Escape

LIGHT reading provides as good a temporary escape as any from present grim realities. It requires a bit more effort than the movies, but the spell lasts longer. There is no waiting for the next show, no emergency transportation problem to disrupt the mood, and the book can be laid aside at the slightest whim. It is interesting to consider what sort of fictional characters—near or remote, admirable or dastardly—are generally the most successful in so focusing attention on their own concerns that the reader for a time quite forgets his own.

For far away and long ago Grace Campbell does a competent job in her current Canadian best-seller. Her pioneers are Scotch, brave, resourceful and their land has its own wild beauty and appeal. Her Scotch-Canadian community becomes very real in its own simple way. And what holds it all together is a fictional recipe that never fails if at all competent—the trials and victory of true love. "The Thorn-Apple Tree" has little specific connection with the present day, but it is none the less absorbing. In format it is charming.

Another popular subject is the romance of the great American West, where love and daring are on a scale commensurate with the surrounding plains and mountains. California, where the frontier fades into the Pacific, has all the West's flair for the grand manner. Thomas Ordway, for instance, went into cattle raising in Henry Ford style; there seemed to be no limit to his herds, no end to his holdings. He was true to his own code, he worked his men all seven days a week. This would seem to be unpromising material for escapism, but Robert Easton so warmly loves the life of a chain cow-hand (which he led before induction into the armed forces) that he succeeds in weaving a happy spell about the rough and thankless round. It is his marvelous tales of ranch house and saloon that do the trick.

It is even possible to escape for the moment by thinking on recent pre-war days and the resumption of normal activities in a small community where there is a real spirit of neighborliness. That is MacKinlay Kantor's achievement in "Happy Land." For it is an evocation of the good things in peacetime American village life. The people accept the war and its sorrows, even the death of an only son, but the theme is that Hartfield will once again be filled with young love and untroubled living. The war will pass; our way of life will be preserved. And by holding forth an ideal attainable in many American communities before too many years have passed, MacKinlay Kantor's little story provides the most effective escape of these three volumes.

Good Family

IN THE PAST even the most fervent of Mr. Saroyan's admirers have had to admit that his greatest fault was a certain lack of self-discipline and form. He has now written his first novel, and it seems very little subject to this almost traditional criticism. "The Human Comedy" is a very moving book. It is a book you can read, and

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will want to read, in an evening, and when you have read it you will be the better for having read it. The story is typically Saroyan and depends upon devices which are not by any means original, but which are always effective when well handled. The principal device is the creation of a number of thoroughly good characters, good in a sense far exceeding the usual senses, good in a way that human nature never is good. Their every thought, action, word is kindly and wise and unselfish.

Of course, the trick is to do this without making them sugary or Pollyanna, and this is a trick which Mr. Saroyan mastered a long time ago. So we have the manager of a Postal Telegraph office; an old telegrapher; Mrs. Macauley, the widowed mother of all the Macauleys, who are really joint hero of the book. The effect produced is a strangely moral effect. (What philosophy there is is wacky, but it matters little.) You know perfectly well that people like this do not exist, that people never are so uniformly good. But somehow their doings and sayings do succeed in conveying that there is such a thing as natural goodness left in mankind, and that when we meet it we should value it and cherish it and recognize it for what it is.

Homer Macauley, the person we see the most of in the story, is a young messenger boy employed by the Postal Telegraph. His is a fine vantage point to observe what goes on in the small California city which is the locale of the novel. It is natural for a telegraph messenger to cross the paths of a great diversity of people and to be able to observe how they live and act. So by this perfectly simple device Mr. Saroyan gives form and structure to a novel covering the usual sprawling range of Saroyan characters. His secondary device is the Macauley family itself, with its son in the Army who gets killed and its daughter who becomes the girl of the soldier-son's buddy, with Mrs. Macauley and her youngest, the all-innocent Ulysses, and, of course, Homer himself. With these two unifying bonds, the book is knit firmly together, and one has the feeling, certainly unusual in Saroyan's work, that one would not like either to add or subtract a jot. It has been rumored that the text of the book was written after the forthcoming movie had been produced, which is very Saroyan indeed. But it makes one wonder whether other novelists might not benefit by trying the same system!

Perhaps the most striking thing about "The Human Comedy" is that it betrays none of the smart-aleck brashness which Saroyan seems to think is charming, and which he certainly has abused in his attempts to attract attention. That is clean gone, and we hope it never will return. Perhaps the realization that he was bound sooner or later to be inducted (it has since happened, and we have seen him in uniform eating Armenian grub at the Palace d'Orient on Lexington Avenue) into the Army and perhaps risk his life, has had a restraining effect. However this may be, "The Human Comedy" is the best Saroyan yet.

More Books of the Week

A Short Life of Kierkegaard. Walter Lowrie. Princeton. $2.75.

ANYBODY expecting the customary biography from this book will turn away disappointed. It is by no means a cut and dried work of factual research, nor is it a popularized version of such a "life." It is more a loving portrait of Dr. Lowrie's hero in which the actual history of this strange and tragic life is only touched upon to develop the spiritual growth of the great Soren Kierkegaard. Those who expect the human interest stories and the day to day background of this spiritual "giant" may have to turn to Lowrie's longer Biography of S. K. The intensity with which the author analyzes and depicts S. K. leaves no room for any other person of the drama except, perhaps, his father. Even the second most decisive actor of this story, Regina, his fiancee, comes only to life as a function in S. K.'s own spiritual development. Between the lines we may be able to guess if she understood S. K. or not; if she really loved him or not; if she was a superficial person or a kindred soul. There is also very little information about the other great personalities of the drama like S. K.'s brother, Peder, a Lutheran bishop, and the Lutheran head of the Danish Established Church, Bishop Mynster. Even S. K.'s own personality and outward life recede before the story of his soul and his great prophetic rebellion against "geographic Christendom" in the name of Christianity, understood as being another Christ. This is probably the best way to write the life of such an instrument of God and an "apostle" as Kierkegaard. The price we pay for it is that we feel a bit terrified and frustrated, if we want more of the ordinary history.

There are only a few objections I would like to make. Dr. Lowrie is so preoccupied with the "otherness" of S. K. that he talks about it constantly from the very beginning, trying to explain things all through the story. That robs him of two things: a good climax which might convince the reader more easily and less laboriously of what Kierkegaard really meant and was, and the joy of discovery for the average reader, unfamiliar with S. K.'s importance. This constant pointing in one direction, this literary trick of piecing together and picking up bits of information here and there is a wonderful piece of artistry, but it will hardly entice many people to read this elegantly written book.

There also seems to be too much reflection and personal chatting on the author's part, which, I feel, is not quite adequate with so stern and prophetic a character as S. K., who was so severe himself with esthetics and genius and who seems to belong in the same line as Tertullian and Pascal. One could wish that the author, who as an Episcopalian and former resident of Rome likes Catholic trappings, would forget about the outward similarity of Danish ecclesiastical terms with "Catholic terminology." The Danish Church is Lutheran, and its ministers are not priests in the sense generally accepted in English, nor has it a bishop's "consecration" or "cathedral," nor is its head bishop a primate in the Catholic or even Anglican sense. Danes pride themselves as Lutherans not to mean "Holy Communion" in the Catholic sense, but the "Lord's Supper" in the Protestant. Why confuse the issue for American and English readers because of a personal preference for "Catholic" terms? The fact that the Danish language suggests a greater similarity in terms with its Catholic past is explained through the fact that the Reformation came to Denmark in disguise and was purposely made less apparent than, e.g., in Switzerland. This is not important on the whole, but it discloses an attitude of the author's—imparting to us a great deal that is only his own. Which puts us unnecessarily on guard against his whole interpretation of S. K. and his selection of facts and choice of translations. His wholesale contempt for what the "Germans" did about S. K.—30 years before the rest of the world!—thus loses some of its convincing evidence. I don't think

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that Theodore Haecker and Romano Guardini are as bad as e.g., C. Schrempff. Alexander Orn's English translation of S. K.'s diaries is undoubtedly based on, or at least strongly influenced by, a German's—Theodore Haecker's —pioneering. Father Victor White's review of Lowrie's translation of "Repetition," and his charitable warning against Lowrie's interpretation, certainly nullifies Lowrie's claim to be the only interpreter of S. K. (*Blackfriars*, December, 1942.)

With all these reservations, the student of Kierkegaard will still have to grant that Dr. Lowrie's "Short Life" is a very fine introduction to our hero's tremendously significant rôle in modern Protestantism and makes very instructive collateral reading for any Catholic who is deeply concerned about our separated brethren and their great spiritual upheavals in the last ten or twenty years. A man like Kierkegaard is the medium for a sudden revelation of the deep spiritual treasures of Protestantism. To sit back smugly and try to be the complacent spectator of the agony of Protestantism would be a foolish, uncharitable and ignorant way for Catholics to help the fulfillment of the desire of all Christians for reunion. We have done and we are doing a great many things to understand the Eastern Churches—although it seems that little progress is made among the faithful and clergy who have not the "Eastern" bug—but what are we doing about the people next door? The superficial policy of shaking hands in public, of hushing over differences and of passing resolutions does not bring about very much except growing indifferentism and a great deal of distrust. I am more convinced after reading Dr. Lowrie's book that S. K. was profoundly Protestant and that the translator is right, even if he believed in everything dialectic theology rejects, but S. K. seems to be the one man who can make the average Catholic understand that Protestantism, although technically a heresy, is deeply Christian and quite able to bring forth a saintly lover of Christ whose "unorthodox" death, unorthodox even in the Protestant sense, is deeply edifying. A few Catholic Kierkegaards, with his immediacy, his wit, his love of God, his humility and piety, his "repetition," his idea of an apostle, his burning charity, and without his lack of authoritative, visible guidance, would be just the thing that is needed to do what Saint Francis and Saint Ignatius did in their days. He was made from their timber, but without the guiding and gentle assistance which we as Catholics have in our mother the Church. Dr. Lowrie's book, if taken in the light of his own very definite stand, is a valuable contribution to setting the stage for fruitful disputation. It brings out exactly those essential points which we have hitherto avoided, without which, however, we are evading the issues. Soeren Kierkegaard has not just been "discovered" to be the subject of a few new books; he has yet to play a tremendous rôle in making geographic Christendom a "repetition" of Christ. The author merits our thanks.

H. A. REINHOLD.

Lords of the Levee. Lloyd Wendt and Herman Kogan. Bobbs. $3.00.

THIS almost unbelievable story could have taken place only in Chicago, and in a Chicago of the past. The book presents the biographies of two Chicago politicians, John J. Coughlin (Bathhouse John) and Michael Kenna (Hinky Dink), who have dominated the political fortunes of Chicago's first ward since 1892, when Coughlin was elected to the city council. His district included the business section of the city and also the area immediately south, known as the Levee, where gambling and vice in general flourished on a scale equalled nowhere else in the United States. Coughlin and Kenna tried to protect this shady business from the occasional waves of reform. It was estimated that eventually the revenue from crime and vice in the city reached $60,000,000 annually, with $15,000,000 as the net profit for those who controlled the system. And yet there is no proof that Coughlin or Kenna made any great profits from politics, crime or vice. In fact, there is good reason to believe that they once rejected $75,000 each from Yerkes, who desired their support for a franchise he was anxious to secure. But they made no denial to the newspaper charge that they held domain over "a vast illicit empire of 400 opium resorts, 100 gambling dens, 7,000 saloons and other haunts of sin, and over a population which is 18 per cent criminal."

In this well written book, based on wide reading and research, the influence of money on local government is made clear. Venality was simply taken for granted year after year, regardless of the political party in power. Against such a background strode Bathhouse John, usually resplendent in a fantastic sartorial ensemble, accompanied by his quiet, shrewd political adviser, Hinky Dink. However, when Coughlin died in 1938 he was a poor man. He had lived expensively at times, and in his later years there was less opportunity to make money in politics. Hinky Dink is now leaving the political arena. Their whole fantastic story is well and clearly told in this plain-spoken book.

PAUL KINIERY.

Make This the Last War. Michael Straight. Harcourt. $3.00.

MACAULAY in his essay on Von Ranke describes a type of another age, who donned the brown habit to preach the Kingdom of God; in our more materialistic day men like Mr. Straight find the Messianic promise in such tangible items as carts, shoes and winter coats (?) for the Africans. Periods of crisis spawn this species; the Jacobin St. Just comes to mind as a classic example. They are men of vision who scan the broad horizons of opportunity and progress; men of hope who are impatient of the slow advance; men of intelligence who are capable of cold calculation; men of faith who have unbounded confidence in vigorous action in the name of government. The author of "Make This the Last War" belongs to this tradition.

Like the prophets of old, this modern editor recognizes the enemy, for he is everywhere. Internationally, he is the fascist, although this term is never defined nor analyzed and comes close to meaning "all whom we do not like." Never is it indicated that excessive nationalism is the prime ingredient of fascism; that materialism is its philosophy and the centralization of power its political form. I know Mr. Straight will be horrified, but at times one wonders just how far away from the "fascist" mentality he really is. Domestically, the foes are legion: "Before the enormity of these crimes [retarding victory], is any punishment too good for those who are responsible? Who are they? A body of industrialists and all the army of their defense, who acted in perfect accordance with the established practices of private enterprise. A tendencious and misleading press that we read and believed. A group of conservatives in government whom we kept there, in fear of more radical men. A jealous and reactionary Congress that we elected. A confused and divided people."

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And sundry others, including such arch-traitors as the State, Navy and War Departments. Even the citadel of government, the Prime Mover for good, can be seized by the enemy. Obviously few are on the side of the angels!

Hence a note of pessimism blends with the fervor. The body of the volume was obviously written before last November, and military disaster impends in the face of our criminal neglect of the second front while the Germans sweep on the Caucasus and Egypt. The final chapter, equally dated, concedes the possibility of victory in arms thanks to the Red Army; but herculean efforts are necessary to win the fruits of peace. I shudder to think of his comments on the deal in North Africa; or his consternation on reaching the armed services to find the overwhelming majority of the crusading youth with a single war aim: to get home quickly.

But difficulties are resolved by the intensity of faith. He blithely liquidates the British Empire, despite warnings to the contrary by high British statesmen. At times he approximates Harold Laski's conviction that the English social structure has not been changed, and will not be for the duration; again he seems hopeful even of Mr. Churchill. It is much the same with China, India and the other United Nations, with the exception of Russia, where even the policy of the Central Commissariat of Nationalities in determining "what elements of culture shall be encouraged and what discarded" is approved by the "liberal" author.

A criticism of the volume might be extended, for here is an impatient dogmatism rather than discussion, and some confusion in assertion, as when nationalism is more and less potent as a result of this war. But no objection can be made to the substance of the argument. The social objectives of Mr. Straight are basically those of all men of good will, and he is to be congratulated in stating them courageously and in detail. Readers of THE COMMONWEAL will welcome the main outlines of his program. While we may never see a United Nations University, Civil Service, Battle Hymn nor RFC, we can rejoice that he has clothed this concept with living flesh, and provided a blueprint for a rational world organization. His plans are extremely ambitious, and they correspond to the logic, if not to the realities, of our present dilemma.

JOSEPH N. MOODY.

The Great Century. Volume V of A History of the Expansion of Christianity. Kenneth Scott Latourette. Harper. $4.00.

IN THE fifth volume of "A History of the Expansion of Christianity" Kenneth Latourette continues the mission history of Christianity for the period 1800 to 1914. Volume IV of the series covered the same period in Europe and the United States; the present volume considers the missionary endeavor in the remaining sections of the Americas, Australasia and Africa south of the Sahara Desert. Volume VI will complete the study of this period in considering Asia and the sections of Africa not included in the present volume.

During the nineteenth century Christian missionary enterprise covered an area larger than at any previous period. No religion has ever spread itself so completely over all five continents. This expansion was due not only to the growth in the Protestant missionary movement, but also to the renewed life in the missionary branch of the Catholic Church. In the preceding century missionary zeal was at a low ebb. Spain and Portugal were no longer

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THE QUERY ABOUT CONSTANTINE

A Catholic who does not know his Church's past is like an American who does not know his country's past. In neither capacity is a man expected to be a specialist, but he should have a general notion of such notable Catholics as Athanasius and Ambrose and Augustine and Alcuin and Abelard and Aquinas, (to get no further than the start of the alphabet) just as he has of Franklin and Jefferson and Washington and Lincoln and Stonewall Jackson and Grover Cleveland.

The Church has the longer history, and one cannot enter into the whole of that heritage in one act. But the aim should be to have the sort of familiarity with the Church's history that we have with our own hometown: the centuries should be known like streets—we would not know all about all of them, some would be better known than others, but each should have its own distinct place and shape for us, and each its outstanding men known to us like our town's monuments. That is a masterable minimum. Less than that would verge on the meagre.

This minimum is aimed at in the Tutorial Masterpiece Series of which we have written in these columns. For those who are not prepared to embark on that series the minimum is still necessary. Now one must begin somewhere: preferably by picking out key figures, grasping what they stand for and working backward and forward from them. One could hardly start better than with the Emperor Constantine, of whom Lloyd Holsapple (Professor of Classics at Manhattanville) has made the first full-length portrait in English to be written by a co-religionist of Constantine!

He was an incredible man. He was incredible in himself—consider him presiding at the Council of Nicea, kissing the empty eye socket of a Bishop whose eye had been torn out by pagan persecutors, then going on to Rome to murder his wife and son. But he was still more incredible in the effect of his reign upon all future ages—we are still benefiting from his wisdom and paying for his mistakes.

His conversion brought almost more problems to the Church than it solved: if you had asked St. Athanasius, for instance, whether Constantine's conversion was a blessing or a misfortune for the Church, I wonder what he would have answered? The difficulty—for the Emperor as well as the Church—was that he was the first Christian Caesar. As such he was faced with new problems—the problem of being temporal lord of a Church of which he was a spiritual subject. No one had ever been in that position before. He had no one else's solutions to guide him or mistakes to warn him.

That was his end of the problem: but the Christian body was equally troubled. When Caesar was a pagan, the situation was simple. He persecuted. One resisted. Very unpleasant, but not at all complicated. But when Caesar was a Christian: he put pressure on the Church: what *were* the Christian Caesar's rights? It was very complicated—and as it turned out very unpleasant too.

No heresy could ever be settled finally now; for the heretic had, what no previous heretic had ever had, a Christian Caesar to appeal to against the Church. And to make the complication finally hellish, there emerged a figure as new as the Christian Caesar and destined to be as permanent—the court prelate. Eusebius was to show the way to a long line of ecclesiastics who were politicians primarily and found their profit in the ruler's favor.

The problems all this raised have been with the Church ever since: from Constantine to Hitler the pattern has recurred. It is fascinating to study it here in its first weaving. And remember—this is only one of the questions raised by Constantine and still troubling us. FJS

CONSTANTINE THE GREAT, by Lloyd Holsapple. Illustrated. $3.00

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able to carry on the extensive missionary program which they had supported in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. It took time for the Catholic Church to readjust its missionary program, which would henceforth be supported by the small contributions of the faithful rather than by the state. That readjustment took place during the nineteenth century.

While Mr. Latourette is devoting three volumes of the series to the history of the nineteenth century—the same space needed to record the eighteen previous centuries—the present volume, even more than its predecessor, appears to be crowded. Because of the great mass of data collected from the four ends of the earth, there is little space left for the comments and conclusions of the author. It was this personal touch of the author which made the first three volumes so interesting and easy to read. The present volume appears to be more an accumulation of facts which are presented without comment. It could not be otherwise unless an additional number of volumes were prepared for the nineteenth century.

One who has read the previous volumes of the series cannot but note that the last century brought into existence a new type of missionary work, namely the Protestant missionary endeavor among people already Christian. This is especially noted in the territories of Central and South America and the Philippines. While many Protestant missionaries in these countries devoted their attention to the non-Christian groups, it would seem that the majority were engaged in an effort to win over Roman Catholics to the Protestant communion. This plan of conquest was not accepted by all of the Protestant group, as is evidenced by the attitude of Bishop Brent of the Philippines, who stated that "this seemed to have an unsavory smack of proselytism from a sister communion." Such endeavor does not appear to have any reason for being included in "A History of the *Expansion* of Christianity." Not all of the agencies engaged in this type of work have done so because of a conviction that the Catholic natives of South America were "little better than pagans," but, on the contrary, some of them have expressed the purpose of their work is to pervert all sincere Roman Catholics in that territory.

Volume V, like the other volumes of the series, gives evidence of long and careful research on the part of Professor Latourette. The footnotes, bibliography and index are complete and the work is well printed.

JOS. P. RYAN.

Continuous Performance. Carrie Balaban. Putnam. $3.50.

THIS IS the biography of A. J. Balaban whose name in Chicago is synonymous with moving picture theater. It traces in rags-to-riches, Horatio-Alger fashion the rise of a Jewish errand boy, who became one of the country's foremost entrepreneurs of entertainment. From the earliest days of movies, the Balaban brothers considered the business of amusement *as a business*. There are many who think that cinema would be better off if it weren't housed in "motion picture palaces" adorned with Balaban and Katz art and Publix stage shows, but few would deny that the Balaban touch became a great and profitable success in the amusement field. This book, in spite of its words-of-one-sylllable style and unaffected naïveté, will interest those who work with motion picture exhibition and those who love reminiscences of the good old days of stage and screen. "Continuous Performance" should also prove invaluable to future historians of American cinema.

The Inner Forum

Teaching the Workers

OPENING of the new Sheil School of Social Studies in Chicago on February 1 calls to mind the whole question of what-is-the-Church-doing-to-educate-American-workers-in-the-responsibilities-of-democracy.

For many years the Jesuits have run summer schools and night schools that included social studies, and the Social Action Department of NCWC toured the country with its popular Industrial Conferences. In January, 1938, the ACTU opened the first so-called "workers' school" in the Fordham classrooms of New York's Woolworth Building, where Fathers Boland, Monaghan and Cox, together with Catholic laymen, gave their time to tell crowded classes about labor ethics, labor law, labor history, trade unionism, parliamentary law and public speaking.

Shortly afterwards the Jesuits opened their Crown Heights School of Catholic Workmen in Brooklyn (Father Smith) and the Xavier Labor School in New York (Father Delaney). Other ACTU chapters started schools, other colleges took it up (for example, New Rochelle), and then the bishops began to organize their own schools on a diocesan basis. In Detroit Archbishop Mooney set up an Archdiocesan Labor Institute that has had as many as 35 parish schools operating on a one-night-a-week basis. Chicago, at last hearing, had ten. And there were others, one or more, functioning in Boston, Hartford, Waterbury, Newark, Buffalo, Pittsburgh, Grand Rapids, Milwaukee, Peoria, Kansas City, New Orleans. The basic curriculum is labor ethics, trade unionism, parliamentary law, and public speaking.

The Sheil School in Chicago is perhaps the most ambitious institution to date. Located in the Catholic Youth Center at 31 East Congress Street, it is really much more than just another workers' school, although including classes in Catholic Social Thought, Labor, and Effective Speech. The general aim of the school is to be "an educational center for the well integrated study of the social problems of the American people in the light of fundamental Christian teaching." There are classes every night, no requirements for admission, and no money involved.

Priests interested in starting a school, or laymen who live in or near one of the cities mentioned and would like to attend one, can obtain appropriate information from Father John M. Hayes, Social Action Department, National Catholic Welfare Conference, 1312 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W., Washington, D. C.

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